

**UNADOPTED
POLEGATE TOWN COUNCIL**



PLANNING COMMITTEE

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 13th January 2014 at 7.30 pm
St Georges Church Hall, 110 Eastbourne Road, Polegate**

Present: M Clewett **MCI** (chair), Mrs M Piper **MP**, Mrs J Voyce **JV**, Mrs C Berry **CB**, J Harmer **JH**, (5)

Not present: Cllrs M Cunningham **MC**, Cllr H Parker **HP**, T Voyce **TV**, J O'Riordan **JOR** (4)

2 members of public

Minute No.	Subject/Resolution	Action
10857	Apologies for absence Cllrs M Cunningham, T Voyce (work), M Pybus (volunteer work), J O'Riordan (health), H Parker (health)	
10858	Declarations of Interest in any items on the agenda None	
10859	Minutes of the Planning committee meetings of the 11th November 2013 It was resolved that the minutes were accurate and signed by the chair VOTE all in favour	
10860	Opportunity for Public comment None wished to speak	
10861	Any other plans received prior to the meeting and notified to the public None	
10862	Wind Farm – further submission for the appeal The chair stated that he had received a copy of the documents from Karen Duke. No date had yet been set for the appeal. It was expected that the appeal would be 3 days long and that the Chair of Planning would attend. Background papers suggesting the wording of the Town Council response had been circulated prior to the meeting. A councillor commented that press releases should go through the town clerk, Mayor or Deputy Mayor. The chair confirmed that all of the correct procedures had been followed. A councillor asked if it was likely that the South Downs National park would be objecting. The chair stated that he thought it was likely but had nothing confirmed. It was resolved that the following would be sent to the Inspector in respect of APP/C1435/A/13/2208526 Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Appeal by Regeneco Limited Site at Land off Shepham Lane, North of A27, Polegate BN24 5BT APP/C1435/13/2208526 Statement by Polegate Town Council This Council remains resolutely against the above proposal. It is not repeating previous objections as the inspector will have all previous documentation. The Council simply wishes to highlight some points and submit three further documents with the inspector, two of which he/she will not have seen. Also the	

Council is not entering into the technological and scientific arguments as these are adequately covered by others.

At the initial presentation given to the Council at the Town Hall by the developers the Town Council was not impressed. In particular the photo montages seemed a fantasy indicating that the proposed turbines would be of less height than the 74m high Met-mast they had erected on site. They stated that their computer graphics were infallible but eventually had to concede that were erroneous. The Town Council held public meetings and only one person spoke in favour. He appeared to be an activist from Brighton whose group is against the generation of electricity from fossil fuels. Just one local resident stated he did not mind turbines. Everyone else was totally against the turbines at Polegate.

As councillors represent those who elected them the Council fully endorsed the overwhelming view of the townsfolk.

There are three documents that the Polegate Town Council wishes to bring to the inspectors attention, two unpublished and one from the Government:-

- 1. A transcript of the statement given to Wealden District Council South Planning Committee on May 8th 2013. This was orally delivered by Councillor Clewett (of Polegate Town Council)**
- 2. A copy of the Government's press release dated 16th November 2013 headed "Wind turbine proposals to be seen by communities first". Quoting from this:- new measures to be laid before parliament shortly, will provide that developers seeking planning permission for onshore wind development involving more than 2 turbines exceeding 15 metres height will need to consult the local community before submitting a formal planning application". On this basis the planning application would never have got to the appeal stage as the Government's intention is absolutely clear on this and should never have got off the ground let alone progress this far.**
- 3. A copy of the press release published in the Sussex Express on Friday 10th January 2014. This summarises the Councils position.**

As a final aside the Council understands that every household is paying at least £60 per year to subsidise these schemes and that the only people who stand to gain are the land owners and the developers who stand to make millions of pounds which of course are paid for by the general populations through taxation. What is the point of these schemes other than this? Three turbines here, 125 off shore at Brighton each twice the height and producing, when they work, twice the output?

The council sincerely trusts that the inspector will dismiss this proposal if only on point 2 mentioned above.

	Wealden District Council, Planning Committee South, May 8th 2013, Shepham Wind Farm Good morning Madam Chair and members of the Planning Committee. My name is Michael Clewett. I am the Chair of Polegate Town Council Planning Committee. My Council sees no difference in principal from the original proposal despite the reduction of the turbines from 5 to 3 and a slight reduction in their height. Two public meetings meeting were held and the vast majority were vehemently against. There were two speakers in favour, one being a local resident and the other a local activist from outside the town. Town Council responded to the application, representing the majority view expressed, our objections being set out in the papers before you. As we are the settlement most affected I earnestly ask the committee members to seriously read this. Regarding letters the overwhelming number are against. It is noticed that contrary to the spontaneous letters against the scheme those in favour are mainly by way of a pro-forma document drawn up presumably by the wind farm promotion group. We do not consider these carry the import of the spontaneous letters referred to above. On the question of the proximity of the turbines to the new housing developments along Dittons Road, which curiously were omitted from the applicant's site plans, I have had one particular response from a couple in the Bluebells Estate. They love their new house and are appalled at the nearness of the proposed turbines. Neither their developer nor solicitors alerted them and they fear a significant devaluation of their new house. They are approximately 560 M from the nearest turbine. In Norway where wind turbines originated they do not allow the building of any onshore turbines within a minimum of 2 kilometres. Our government is still considering legislation. It is understood that Norway has in fact ceased to build turbines onshore. There are two points to stress. At present there is only one turbine in Sussex at Glyndebourne. This is only 70 metres in height. Reports in the press have several times stated that this has a maximum efficiency of 18%. Many people living in the vicinity have written stating that it can be heard over a mile away. Secondly the proposed offshore wind farm at Brighton is nearing the end of its planning process and over 120 turbines are suggested. The 3 in this proposal will have a minimal impact compared with this and at a huge and damaging effect on the visual amenities of this beautiful part of our country. The effect on local wildlife is incalculable but many species will be adversely compromised. It would be better for the developers to offer to erect their 3 turbines as part of this offshore development. It should not affect the enormous subsidy they will get for erecting these machines. Finally, we have assessed this application taking into account the overwhelming majority of our townsfolk's views which we consider to be only right given that we were elected to represent them. Similarly we consider that the elected councillors at District level should also vote in accordance with the clear opinion of the majority in this area.	
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press release

Wind turbine proposals to be seen by communities first

Organisations: [Department for Communities and Local Government](#)

and [Department of Energy & Climate Change](#)

Page history: Published 16 November 2013

Policy: [Giving communities more power in planning local development](#)

Topics: [Climate change](#)

+ 2 others

Ministers: [The Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP](#)
and [The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP](#)

Communities to be consulted on wind turbine proposals and siting.



Communities will have a much greater say over wind turbine proposals and siting when early consultation between local people and developers becomes compulsory.

Many communities feel forced to consider wind farm and turbine plans they have had no part in shaping, and want early and open discussions with developers to influence proposals and to improve the outcome for their area.

Planning works best when people have the opportunity to influence decisions that affect their lives and when developers hear concerns early on, but many people feel cut out of the initial process of steering turbine development.

New measures, to be laid before Parliament shortly, will provide that developers seeking planning permission for onshore wind development involving more than 2 turbines or any turbine exceeding 15 metres height will need to consult the local community before submitting a formal planning application.

When a proposal meets the criteria, the developer will need to consult to ensure communities views about siting and other relevant planning issues can be heard first. The measure will come into force before the end of the year.

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Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, said:

We are making sure local people have a crystal clear voice in airing their opinions on wind turbines very early on. From day 1 communities should be centre stage in crafting plans that affect their lives instead of having them forced upon them.

Ensuring communities have a greater say at an early stage allows developers to consider much earlier whether to pursue a proposal and what changes they should consider before putting forward formal plans. Our changes allow people's views and other impacts to be taken into consideration much earlier.

Energy Minister, Michael Fallon, said:

These new rules will help ensure that in future people have a say earlier on in the process over where onshore turbines are sited.

Wind is an important part of the UK's energy mix, and both government and industry agree that these proposals will ensure that new turbines are appropriately sited.

The measures build on existing industry best practice that already takes place for most commercial scale applications, where early engagement is required, and complement the need for good local plan making.

Further information

1. Details of the measures will be set out in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure and Section 62A Applications (England) (Amendment) Order 2013.
2. The measures respond to important outcomes from the Department of Energy and Climate Change's [onshore wind call for evidence](#), that showed people wanted open and early dialogue with developers and highlighted the benefits of good quality pre-application discussion.
3. [New practice guidance](#) makes clear that the need for renewable energy does not automatically override local environmental and heritage protections and the concerns of local communities.

Media enquiries

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Published:

16 November 2013

Organisations:

Department for Communities and Local Government

Department of Energy & Climate Change

Policy:

Giving communities more power in planning local development

Ministers:

The Rt Hon Michael Fallon MP

The Rt Hon Eric Pickles MP

Here is the official press statement by Polegate Town Council in response to the planning appeal submitted by Regeneco against the refusal by Wealden District Council of their revised planning application to erect three wind turbines on land to the north of the town.

TEXT

Polegate Town Council were given a presentation by the developers in 2011. This was for five turbines standing 126.5M high. Council members were not impressed and in particular photo-montages suggested that these would be half of their actual size, a point eventually accepted by Wealden District Council planners. There were many other concerns, not least the proximity to the two new estates being built at the north of the town, Bluebells and The Mill. These developments did not even appear on the submitted drawings with the planning application. The closest point to Bluebells is only 560M from the nearest turbine and yet in Scandinavia and most western European countries a limit of 1.5KM is set and in some cases 2KM. There are other considerations, the visual impact, alleged danger to the health of certain people, noise (the turbine at Glynde, half the height, can be heard up to one and a half miles away) and various other reasons which specialist groups will raise at the appeal. There is now the disclosure that every household pays £60 subsidy on energy bills each year which far outweighs the sop the developers are offering.

The Town Council held two public meetings, the first very well attended when the original application for five turbines was submitted. Only one person, a non-resident, spoke in favour and it transpired he is an activist for a Brighton based group opposed to electricity generation by fossil fuels. The town planning committee voted unanimously to oppose the application, (we are consultees only), and the application was later withdrawn after the developers were advised that the planning officers were recommending refusal. A revised application for three turbines was then submitted, slightly lowering the height but not changing the proximity to Bluebells. Again a public meeting was held and this time everyone was opposed except for one resident living at a distance from the site who said he did not mind. This application was refused by the WDC South Planning Committee at their meeting held in May 2013 and forms the basis of the appeal.

On November 16th 2013 the Government issued a press release entitled "Wind turbine proposals to be seen by communities first". To quote, "New measures , to be laid before Parliament shortly, will provide that developers seeking planning permission for onshore wind development involving more than 2 turbines or any turbine exceeding 15 metres in height will need to consult the local community before submitting a formal planning application". On this basis this application would never have got off the starting blocks.

It is clear that the vast majority of residents in Polegate are opposed to this proposal. The Town Council is firm in its commitment that the views of residents should be the primary consideration and we will vigorously continue to oppose this proposal.

The only people who will benefit from this are the developers and the landowner who stand to make millions of pounds paid in subsidies out of our taxation. What is the point otherwise of these turbines here when it is proposed to build about 125 at twice the height and three times, alleged, efficiency out to sea at Brighton.

Michael A Clewett, Chair of Planning, Polegate Town Council, 5th January 2014

VOTE All in favour

10863	Delegated Applications <i>The clerk pointed out that there has been two typos on the agenda which stated Cllr T Voyce has objections to WD/2013/2376 and WD/2013/0644 both of which he had submitted no objections to the plans and they had been submitted to Wealden with no objections as the majority vote.</i> Delegated Committee: Cllrs M Clewett, T Voyce, Mrs C Berry WD/2013/2330/F 4 Hythe Close Polegate BN26 6LQ Single Storey Side Extension No objections WD/2013/2376/FA Land adjoining Chaucer Business Park, Dittons Road Polegate BN26 6JF Variation of condition 23 of WD/2013/0644/MAJ (Extension of business park comprising erection of two storey offices together with B1/B8 light industrial and warehouse units including loading and parking facilities) in respect of re design of roof profiles on units B5-B7 No Objections submitted to Wealden District Council (Cllr M Clewett T Voyce No objections, Cllr Mrs C Berry Objections) WD/2013/2207/F 97 Brightling Road, Polegate BN26 5AX Conversion of garage, front porch and rear additions No Objections WD/2013/2019/FA Land Adjoining Chaucer business park, Dittons Road, Polegate BN26 6JF Amended description – variation of condition 23 of WD/2013/0644/MAJ to change roof design of units B1-B4 to accommodate additional solar panels No objections submitted to Wealden District Council (Cllr M Clewett T Voyce No objections, Cllr Mrs C Berry Objections)	
10864	Planning decisions WD/2013/1996/F 28 Old drive, Polegate BN26 5ET Proposed extension to side and rear and loft conversion with hip to gable roof extension, rear dormers and roof windows and associated alterations. WITHDRAWN ON 26TH NOVEMBER 2013 WD/2013/1968/F 25 Gilda Crescent Polegate BN26 6AW Erect Single storey extension at front Approved by Wealden District Council on 12th November 2013 WD/2013/2019/FA land Adjoining Chaucer Business park Dittons Road, Polegate BN26 6JF Variation of condition 23 of WD/2013/0644/MAJ to change roof design of units B1 to B4 to accommodate additional solar panels Approved by Wealden District Council on 18th November 2013 WD/2013/1960/F 4 Rye Close, Polegate BN26 6LT Erect single storey extension at rear and garage at side Approved by Wealden District Council on 20th November 2013 WD/2013/2207/F 97 Brightling Road, Polegate BN26 5AX Conversion of garage, front porch and rear additions Approved by Wealden District Council on 20th December 2013 WD/2013/2330/F 4 Hythe Close Polegate BN26 6LQ	

	Single Storey Side Extension Approved by Wealden District Council on 23 rd December 2013	
10865	Planning updates/general Information – for information only a. Copy of Polegate Movement & Access Strategy Strategic in office b. Notice of Appeal – Regeneco Limited – site land off Shepham Lane North of A27, BN24 5BT (Wind Farm) WD/2013/0346/MEA appeal APP/C1435/A/13/2208526 The wind farm appeal was discussed under 10862.	

The meeting closed at 7.39 pm